

# Frequently asked questions about neighborhood traffic changes during the replacement of the NE 129th Street freeway overcrossing on I-5



proud past, promising future



## Why is the NE 129th Street freeway overcrossing being replaced?

The replacement of the NE 129th Street freeway overcrossing is part of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) I-5 widening project between NE 99th Street/Salmon Creek Boulevard and I-205. The project requires that the NE 129th Street freeway overcrossing be closed for a period of five months - from the end of January through June, 2004. Although the I-5 widening, including the replacement of the NE 129th Street bridge, is a state project, construction will affect traffic on the surrounding neighborhood streets that are maintained by Clark County. WSDOT has partnered with Clark County to develop a plan to ease traffic in the area that includes adding temporary speed bumps on neighborhood streets to reduce speeding and restricting left turns from NE 134th Street onto NE 12th Avenue.

## What was done to make this intersection safe?

Several measures have been taken to increase safety at the intersection of NE 134th Street and NE 12th Avenue. This intersection has a repeated collision history related to left turns. The eastbound traffic at the intersection of NE 12th Avenue and NE 134th Street has insufficient gaps between vehicles for additional left turns added to the intersection during the bridge closure.

To help avoid even greater collision risk resulting from a significant increase in left turns, the westbound and northbound left turns are now restricted by a new center island. Drivers who want to enter the neighborhood can drive to the signal at NW 2nd Avenue and enter the neighborhood from the west, or loop around the Fred Meyer

complex on public roads (NE 139th Street, NE 10th Avenue), turn left at the intersection of NE 10th Avenue at NE 134th Street, and then turn right onto NE 12th Avenue.

## Why can't the speed limit on NE 134th Street be lowered?

The speed limit on NE 134th Street was lowered once before. The posted speed limit of 30 m.p.h. is unusually low for a street of this nature. A typical speed limit on this class of road is 35 to 45 m.p.h.

Studies have shown that lowering a speed limit does not create slower traffic. The Clark County Sheriff's Office is aware of the speeding issues in this area and is monitoring the situation.

**Call the Clark County Sheriff's Office Speeder Hotline, (360) 397-6008 ext. 5482, to report speeders on any county road. If you would like to speak with someone in person, please include your name and telephone number, and state on the voice mail that you would like to be contacted.**





### Can a stop light be installed at NE 12th Avenue and NE 134th Street?

Although installing a traffic light at the intersection of NE 12th Avenue at NE 134th Street was considered, county traffic engineers determined that a signal at this location would actually result in more negative effects than positive on overall traffic flow in the NE 134th Street corridor. A traffic signal at this location would also greatly increase the volume of traffic on NE 12th Avenue, which is a narrow neighborhood road without sidewalks. In considering the needs of all the users of these county roads, including the 35,000 cars per day on NE 134th Street, the county decided not to install a traffic light at this location.

### How can people be discouraged from cutting through the gas station and other parking lots east of the intersection?

The left turn restriction at the intersection of NE 12th Avenue at NE 134th Street includes a center median curb along NE 12th Avenue. This curb was installed to prohibit left turns out of the commercial driveway, specifically because it was expected that some drivers would drive through the Mobile gas station and Kindercare parking lots to get around the left turn restriction at NE 12th Avenue and NE 134th Street. The Clark County Sheriff's Office has been notified that some people are making the left turn at the commercial driveway and driving

southbound in the northbound lanes. The Sheriff's Office has requested that patrol sergeants monitor the situation.

### Why are speed limit signs and speed bumps right in front of my house?

Speed bumps are installed to reduce the speed of the rerouted traffic on neighborhood streets. They are located approximately in the middle of each block - the best location to reduce the speed of cars. They cannot be located too close to intersections because drivers need to see warning signs and adjust their speed prior to driving over the them.

The speed bumps and signs were located on or near property lines wherever possible. WSDOT has moved many signs to reduce the visual impact to the adjacent homeowners, while providing adequate warning to drivers.

### Can emergency vehicles access the neighborhood with speed bumps across NE 134th Street?

Emergency vehicles from the fire station on the north side of NE 134th Street and west of NE 12th Avenue still have access into the neighborhood. The curbing installed at NE 12th Avenue at NE 134th Street is designed so an emergency vehicle can drive onto the curbing and make the left turn if needed. It is illegal for a private citizen to do this.

The speed bumps in the neighborhood are consistent in design with the existing speed

bumps on NE 129th Street. The emergency response vehicles are still able to access the neighborhood even with the speed bumps in place.

### Will the county maintain the NE 12th Avenue/NE 134th Street access restrictions after the new bridge is open?

The county intends to leave the left turn restriction in place throughout the NE 129th Street bridge closure and maintain the left turn restriction for the duration of the Highway 99 realignment. When both construction projects are complete, the county will evaluate the access needs with the collision potential at the intersection, and determine whether it should retain the left turn restrictions.

### Can the trees at the intersection be cut down to improve visibility?

Prior to removal of the NE 129th Street bridge, bushes in county right-of-way, south of the Kindercare commercial driveway on NE 12th Avenue, were cut down to increase visibility at the intersection. The county will install a privacy fence outside the public right-of-way on the property next to where the bushes were located, as well as plant grass in the area where the bushes were removed.

The removal of nearby trees on private property cannot be required by the county.

